

REMARKS

Claims 1-5, 7-10, 13-16, and 19-22 are pending. No claims are amended, cancelled, or added. In view of the following comments, reconsideration and allowance of all the claims pending in the application are respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1-5, 7-10, 13-16, and 19-22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a), as allegedly being unpatentable over Bowman et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,169,986) in view of Pant et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,012,053) and in further view of Beall et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,748,376). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection on the following basis.

Independent claims 1, 7, 13, and 19 recite the feature of searching a first search result for objects that satisfy a second search query, among other things. In an exemplary embodiment, a first search may retrieve a first search result that includes one or more documents, these documents may satisfy a first search query (see the Specification at page 3, lines 1-3). The system may identify a search refinement option that may enable a user to further limit the documents included in the first search result (see the Specification at page 3, lines 6 and 7). Upon selection by the user, a search refinement option may be applied only to documents included in the first search result (see the specification at page 3, lines 10-12).

Bowman discloses a search engine that provides a user with suggested related terms in order to refine a search performed based on a first search query (see Bowman, the Abstract). In the search engine described in Bowman, refining a search includes performing an entirely new search of a database, wherein the new search is conducted using a new search query that includes the first search query and a suggested related search term (col. 14 lines 31-35). Bowman does not, however, teach or suggest searching a first search result for objects that satisfy a second search query.

The Examiner admits that Bowman is deficient for failing to disclose retrieving a search result comprising at least one object if a determination is made that the at least one object satisfies the search query, and determining a type of information included in

the at least one object (see the Office Action at page 4, lines 5-9). The Examiner alleges that Pant teaches these features. Pant appears to disclose a system for ranking results from a search query based on user specified relevance factors (see Pant at the Abstract). Even if the Examiner's assertion is accepted, Pant does not teach or suggest searching a first search result for objects that satisfy a second search query.

The Examiner further acknowledges that the combination of Bowman and Pant does not teach or suggest "the type of information of search [sic] and the second search query comprising the at least one refinement option" (see the Office Action at page 4, lines 13-15), but alleges that Beall teaches these features. Applicants note that the Examiner does not rely on Beall, Pant, or Bowman, for disclosing searching a first search result for objects that satisfy a second search query. Beall apparently describes a system for database manipulation that enables users to refine a search. In the system disclosed in Beall, a search of a database, performed based on a search query from a user, may produce a search result that includes a plurality of items that match the search query (see Beall at col. 6, lines 29-34). The search may be refined by selecting a category that corresponds to some of the items included in the search result (see Beall at col. 6, lines 50-55). The selection of a category by the user becomes equivalent to submitting a predefined query to the database, which will return only items that match the search query and correspond to the selected category (see Beall at col. 7, lines 35 and 36). In other words, similar to the search refinement taught in Bowman, the selection of a category in the system of Beall results in the submission of a second search query to the database for a new search of the entire database. However, Bowman does not disclose performing a second search wherein only the items included in the first search result are searched. Therefore, Bowman, Pant, and Beall, both alone and in combination with each other, do not teach or suggest searching a first search result for objects that satisfy a second search query.


In view of the foregoing differences between independent claims 1, 7, 13, and 19 and the cited art, Applicants respectfully submit that these claims 1, 7, 13, and 19 are believed to be allowable over the cited references. Further, claims 2-5, 8-10, 14-16,

and 20-22 depend from corresponding ones of claims 1, 7, 13, and 19, and are therefore allowable at least by virtue of their dependency, as well as for the features they add to the independent claims.

Having addressed each of the foregoing rejections, it is respectfully submitted that a full and complete response has been made to the Office Action and, as such, the application is in condition for allowance. Notice to that effect is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

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Respectfully submitted,



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